

Sinclair Broadcasting's decision to force their stations to air an anti-Kerry documentary days before the election is a clear example of the dangers of media consolidation.

Sinclair uses the public airwaves free of charge, and is obligated by law to serve the public interest. This issue isn't about free speech, it is about a violation by a broadcaster of its public trust and three fundamental American values - fair play, mutual respect, and preservation of the public's assets (including the airwaves) for the benefit of all the public, not just the controlling few. Sinclair's misuse of the public asset with which it has been entrusted is unprincipled, unprecedented, and just plain wrong.

I had originally not had an opinion about deconsolidation, but Sinclair's threatened action and the FCC's lack of a timely response show why we need to strengthen media ownership rules, not weaken them, and also bring back equal time requirements.

Moreover, a broadcaster, like Sinclair, who has shown a willingness to abuse its position for a hoped-for future political quid-pro-quo should be deprived of its licenses at the next renewal, and particularly deprived of any exemptions from applicable regulations such as "duopolies".

Very respectfully,